

Sunday, February 26, 2023

1st Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY'S READINGS: Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

SUNDAY'S GOSPEL:

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you' and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'" Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"

Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY DISCUSSION IN PREPARATION FOR SUNDAY

1. The devil came to tempt Jesus when He was most vulnerable – after experiencing the difficulties of fasting in the desert for 40 days. The devil does the same with us – often choosing to tempt us when things are most difficult. Describe a time that the devil tried to tempt you when you were going through some difficulty. Was it more difficult to avoid that temptation; why?
2. Satan's first temptations of Jesus involved pleasure and desires (when Satan tempted Him to turn the stone into bread). What is your own experience of this type of temptation? What are the ways that you are tempted to give into pleasures and desires? What can we learn from Jesus' example in this Gospel about how to battle this type of temptation?
3. Satan's second temptation of Jesus involved pushing limits and taking God for granted (when Satan tempted Him to throw Himself down). What is your own experience of this type of temptation? What are the ways that you are tempted to push boundaries of sin? What can we learn from Jesus' example in this Gospel about how to battle this type of temptation?
4. Satan's final temptation of Jesus involved avoiding suffering (when Satan offered Jesus the ability to save the kingdoms of the world without dying on the cross). What is your own experience of this type of temptation? What are the ways that you are tempted to avoid suffering? What can we learn from Jesus' example in this Gospel about how to battle this type of temptation?
5. After the temptations, angels came and ministered to Jesus. Describe a time when you successfully were able to battle against a temptation. How did God help you during the temptation and even after it?